

REMARKS

Claims 1-22 were examined. Claims 1-8 and 10-22 were rejected, while claim 9 was noted to contain allowable material. In response to the above-identified Office Action, Applicants amend claims 1, 9, 12, 13, 17 and 20, and add new claims 23 and 24. Reconsideration of the rejected claims in light of the aforementioned amendments and the following remarks is requested.

I. Claims Rejected Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 2, 6, 12, 13, 17 and 20 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by European Patent Application No. EP 0 983 852 by Komori ("*Komori*"). It is axiomatic that a § 102(b) reference must teach every element of the rejected claims, and Applicants believe *Komori* fails to do this.

As to claim 1, that claim recites an ink supply amount control method for a printing press, comprising a number of steps, including altering a swing operation of an ink ductor roller which is arranged in the ink supply path and swings in synchronism with rotation of a printing plate by preventing at least one swing and permitting at least one swing out of each plurality of potential swings, and when a swing operation of the ink doctor roller is prevented, controlling an operation of at least one of the ink fountain key and the ink fountain roller to control an ink supply amount to the ink doctor roller. The Examiner asserts that *Komori* teaches this intermittent stopping and controlling at col. 2, lines 9-10 and 25-28, but closer review of these sections (and the reference generally) shows that *Komori*'s focus and method differ from that disclosed in the pending application.

Specifically, *Komori* teaches a method for improving printing operation efficiency when printing plates must be changed (*i.e. between* printing jobs). By applying the method, a minimum ink film thickness can be maintained on the distribution rollers, and consequently less time and paper are required to calibrate the press for the new plates.

In contrast, the method of claim 1 is applied *during* a printing job to suppress density variations in printing products with a low image area ratio, while avoiding ink shortages in portions with a high image area ratio (*see* Specification p. 4).

This distinction is embodied in the claim as “altering a swing operation of an ink ductor roller ... by preventing at least one swing and permitting at least one swing out of a plurality of potential swings.” *Komori* fails to teach or suggest preventing only *some* of the swinging operations during a printing run; its method requires stopping the ductor roller completely in preparation to change the printing plates, and then starting the swinging operation again once the plates have been changed. For at least this reason, Applicants respectfully submit that *Komori* fails to anticipate claim 1, and request that this rejection be withdrawn.

As to claims 2 and 6, those claims depend on claim 1, and are allowable for at least the reasons advanced in support of that base claim. Applicants ask the Examiner to withdraw the rejections of claims 2 and 6 also.

As to claim 12, that claim recites an ink supply amount control apparatus for a printing press, comprising a number of means including a swing control means for preventing at least one swing operation of an ink ductor roller and permitting at least one swing operation of the ink ductor roller out of each plurality of potential swing operations, the potential swing operations occurring in synchronization with the rotation of the printing press. Although *Komori* discloses stopping the feed operation of the ink ductor roller entirely, it fails to disclose any means for periodically preventing some and permitting some swing operations out of each plurality of potential swing operations, where the potential swing operations occur in synchronization with the rotation of the printing press. For at least these reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that *Komori* fails to anticipate claim 12, and request that this rejection be withdrawn.

As to claims 13, 17 and 20, those claims depend upon claim 12, and are allowable for at least the reasons advanced in support of that base claim. Applicants ask the Examiner to withdraw the rejections of these claims as well.

The Examiner also rejected claims 1-8 and 10-22 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by European Patent Application No. EP 1 083 047 by Tomita *et al.* (“*Tomita*”). For the reasons discussed below, Applicants believe *Tomita*, too, fails to provide adequate teaching or suggestion to support these rejections.

Applicants note that *Tomita* mentions the ink ductor roller exactly *once*¹, naming it as one of the labeled elements depicted in Fig. 17 (which is substantially the same as

¹ Col. 3, ¶ 0003.

the current application's Fig. 20). This solitary mention seems to fall far short of "teaching the first supplying and intermittently stopping steps," despite the Examiner's assertion. In fact, *Tomita* never explains the ductor roller's function in delivering ink to the ink supply path, that the ductor roller normally swings between the fountain roller and the ink roller group, or that a benefit might be obtained by periodically interrupting its swinging motion.

Since controlling the operation of the ink ductor roller is clearly recited in both independent claims (1 and 12) and consequently incorporated in every dependent claim, Applicants believe that *Tomita* cannot possibly "clearly anticipate" the rejected claims. The Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the rejections of claims 1-8 and 10-22, or to provide more detailed analysis to show how *Tomita* teaches or suggests operations related to the ink ductor roller.

II. Allowable Material

Applicants note with appreciation that the Examiner determined claim 9 to contain allowable material.



CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, it is believed that all claims now pending, namely claims 1-24, patentably define the subject invention over the prior art of record, and are in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited at the earliest possible date. If the Examiner believes that a telephone conference would be useful in moving the application forward to allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned at (310) 207-3800.

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Respectfully submitted,
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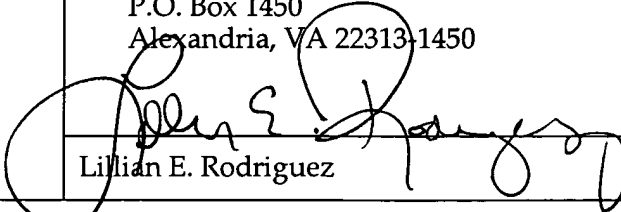
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